

REMARKS

Entry of this amendment prior to examination is respectfully requested.

By the present amendment, the required continuing information under 37 CFR § 1.72 is provided. In addition, claims 1 and 4-6 have been cancelled, noting that these claims are directed to Group I of the Election of Species Requirement dated January 29, 2003 in the parent application, and, further, that these claims had been elected for prosecution in the parent case. By virtue of the cancellation of these claims, claims 2, 3 and 7-12 remain in the present divisional application for examination. It is noted that these claims were divided into Groups II – VI in the January 29, 2003 Restriction Requirement. However, examination of these claims as a group is respectfully requested, notwithstanding the election requirement in the parent case, based upon the close relationship that these claims have with one another. Effectively, these claims contain substantially identical limitations except for the ending portion of each of the claims. With regard to these ending portions, in most cases, these are directed to either the prevention of leakage current between the switching device and the semiconductor substrate or the insulation of the switching device and the semiconductor substrate from one another (which will, of course, reduce leakage current). As such, it is respectfully submitted that essentially the same search will be required for all of these groups of claims, and many common issues will arise during the examination thereof. As set forth in MPEP 803:

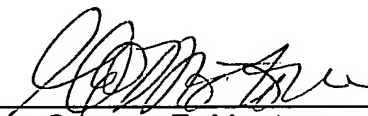
“If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.”

It is respectfully submitted that essentially this situation exists here since, as noted above, there is an extremely close relationship between all of these groups of claims and, as such, there should be no serious burden in examining these multiple groups. Indeed, it is respectfully submitted that a much greater burden will exist if individual applications must be filed for each of these closely related groups. On the part of the USPTO, substantial resources will be required for conducting multiple examinations. These resources will, in effect, be spent on duplication and redundant searching. From the Applicant's perspective, substantially greater expense will result from maintaining the election requirement, again noting the duplication of effort involved. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that these groups be consolidated and that examination proceed on the pending claims 2, 3 and 7-12 in this divisional application.

Kindly charge any additional fees due, or credit overpayment of fees, to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Docket No. 500.41214X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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